

have liked to have seen us put more of an emphasis on debt reduction. But we will have other opportunities to make those points and other opportunities to vote on those priorities.

I conclude by thanking all of our colleagues for their patience and their graciousness during this period.

I also want to take this moment to thank the staffs who worked so hard during this period because these have been long nights and difficult days.

I want to start with Mary Naylor, my staff director on the Senate Budget Committee, who did a superb job under difficult circumstances; and Jim Horney, who is also a top staffer, the deputy staff director for the Senate Budget Committee; Sue Nelson, who produced chart after chart that showed us where we stood at every juncture so we knew precisely where we were, which I think helped us make wise decisions; Lisa Konwinski, our counsel, who Lisa drafted amendment after amendment, not only for me but for our colleagues, and did a superb job; Sarah Kuehl, who has primary responsibility in the Social Security area; Steve Bailey, our tax counsel; Dakota Rudesill, who handles national security issues and national defense; Scott Carlson and Tim Galvin, who handle agriculture for the committee; Shelley Amdur, who is our education specialist; Jim Esquea and Bonnie Galvin; Chad Stone, our economist; Rock Cheung, who helped produce those charts, and I think helped us be more successful than we would have otherwise been; and certainly Karin Kullman, who joined the staff to help us do outreach to groups who were interested in the budget; and, finally, my terrific press team, Stu Nagurka and Steve Posner, who had their hands full.

Goodness knows, I appreciate the work all of you have done. I appreciate very much the long hours you have put in and your real dedication. You have made me proud. I think you have helped us improve the budget for our country.

I thank the staff on the other side, especially the staff director for Senator DOMENICI, Bill Hoagland, who is a class act. He deserves all of our thanks for the professionalism with which he conducts himself.

Mr. President, again, I thank everyone who has made this an interesting first experience for me in my position on the Budget Committee.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT HOFFMAN

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to say thank you—thank you to my legislative director for the past four years, Mr. Robert Hoffman. Robert—my right-hand man—will be leaving Capitol Hill shortly for a promising career in the private sector.

But I speak for a lot of people on the Hill—Members and staffers, alike—

when I say that although we are very happy for Robert and we wish him well, we are saddened by his upcoming departure and will miss him dearly.

We will miss Robert's dedication to this institution.

We will miss his optimism and his sense of humor.

We will miss his unstoppable work ethic.

But most of all, we will just miss him.

Robert Hoffman has, himself, become somewhat of an institution here on Capitol Hill. Almost exactly twelve years ago today—April 3, 1989—Robert started working in Washington for former California Senator, Pete Wilson.

Robert, a California native, didn't start off as Senator Wilson's legislative director. Oh no. He started in the mail room. His dogged determination and his amazing ability to absorb issues quickly propelled him upward within the Wilson operation. In less than a year, Robert had become a legislative correspondent and within another year, he was working in Sacramento as deputy speech writer after Senator Wilson became Governor of California.

Robert, though, missed Capitol Hill—and Capitol Hill missed him. By May 1991, he was back in Washington, this time working as a legislative assistant for another former California Senator, John Seymour. Robert thrived as a legislative assistant, handling complex issues ranging from crime to immigration.

In practically no time, Robert was ready for a managerial role. In December 1992, he started a long tenure with our former colleague from South Dakota, Senator Larry Pressler.

By the young age of only 27, Robert was serving as Senator Pressler's legislative director. Though Robert's loyalty to Governor Wilson called him back for slightly over a year to work as the Governor's Deputy Director of his Washington office, Robert stayed with the Pressler organization until January 1997. To this day, Senator Pressler is thankful for having had Robert at the helm of his legislative operation.

The Senator has described Robert as one of the "all time finest legislative assistants and legislative directors on Capitol Hill. He is a man of great personal values and decency—a decency that is contagious."

Senator Pressler said it well.

I know, too, that Senator Pressler greatly valued—and still values, as I do—Robert's deep grasp and understanding of foreign policy and national security matters. Robert accompanied Senator Pressler and Senator SPECTER on a trip to Africa. Senator Pressler speaks fondly of that trip and of Robert's "superb job of managing it." According to Senator Pressler: "Robert made that trip. He got us there and back in one piece, which was no easy

feat! He managed the whole thing, dealt with heads of state, and knew all the issues—forward and back."

Robert came to my office in February 1997. He's been my legislative director for over four years now. And, during that time, I have learned a great deal about this fine man.

I have learned that he is loyal to a fault.

I have learned that he is a workhorse.

I have learned that he is an incredible strategist, manager, teacher, thinker, leader, and friend.

I have also learned that there is nothing Robert Hoffman can't do. To use one of Robert's favorite phrases: "He just gets it. He just gets the joke."

Robert is one of the best "big picture" thinkers I have ever encountered. He gets the whole scene; he understands it. He can put things in their proper perspective. No one does a better job in taking complex issues, simplifying them and explaining them. He understands how all the pieces in a legislative operation fit together.

He understands politics.

He understands policy.

He understands press.

That combination of skills—that kind of raw talent and intuitive intelligence—is a true rarity here in Washington or anywhere, for that matter.

As anyone who has worked with Robert knows, he always gets the job done. No ifs. No buts. No excuses. He just gets the job done. He is a fair and tempered negotiator. Certainly, I have seen that. I have seen him in situations where I didn't think we would be successful, and he went into negotiation and came out with a lot better deal than I imagined we could achieve. He gets it done in a quiet, thoughtful, professional way. Robert Hoffman knows how to get bills passed into law. He knows the ins and outs of the legislative process. And, he has the ability to bring sides together to reach consensus and build bipartisan relationships.

While Robert's professionalism and work ethic are second to none, I would be remiss to not mention Robert's strength of character and personal integrity.

He is a gentleman—a kind man, a sincere man, and a man who cares about people. He cares about every single person in my office.

He cares about them on a professional level, and he cares about them on a personal level. He cares about them as people.

Robert Hoffman is a good man, and I am privileged to have had the extraordinary opportunity to work with him and call him my friend.

As he departs Capitol Hill after twelve fruitful, fearless, and fun years, I wish him and his lovely new wife, Andrea, all the best in the world. Thank you, Robert.

Mr. President, those in the Chamber and on Capitol Hill who will miss Robert Hoffman will still be able to see

him. One of the easiest ways to do that is to watch the reruns of "Little House on the Prairie." Robert started his professional career actually before he came to Capitol Hill. He started as one of the stars on the original version of "Little House on the Prairie." Those of you who are up late at night and who have the opportunity to see a rerun, if you see someone who looks like Robert Hoffman, it is. You will have the opportunity to see a much younger version of Robert on that show.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MODIFICATION OF UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT WITH RESPECT TO CONFEREES TO THE BUDGET RESOLUTION

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, on behalf of Leader LOTT, I ask unanimous consent that the previous consent agreement with respect to conferees to the budget resolution be modified to allow for one additional conferee per side, and further, the Republican conferee be Senator NICKLES and the Democrat nominee be named on April 23.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 8

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, also, on behalf of the leader, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 8) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to phase out the estate and gift taxes over a 10-year period, and for other purposes.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on this bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. This bill will be placed on the calendar.

#### CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR THEIR CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 69, submitted earlier today by Senators BAYH and LUGAR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 69) congratulating the Fighting Irish of the University of Notre Dame for winning the 2001 women's basketball championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleague from Indiana as a cosponsor of this resolution congratulating the women's basketball team of the University of Notre Dame for winning the 2001 women's basketball championship.

This remarkable achievement by the Fighting Irish women's basketball team culminates a season in which Coach Muffet McGraw and her team achieved an outstanding 34-2 record. Player Ruth Riley, an Indiana native, earned the titles Big East Player of the Year and Outstanding Player of the Final Four. Her teammate, Niele Ivey, suffered a sprained ankle during the semifinal game but persevered to help the Fighting Irish win their 68-66 final game victory over the determined Purdue University Lady Boilermakers.

The women basketball players of Notre Dame offer an example of dedication, skill, and sportsmanship as they bring Notre Dame its first national basketball title.

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I rise today with my colleague Senator RICHARD LUGAR to introduce a bipartisan resolution honoring the University of Notre Dame women's basketball team for winning the school's first ever National Collegiate Athletic Association, NCAA, Division I basketball championship.

On April 1, 2001, this remarkable group of young women—led by senior All-American and native Hoosier Ruth Riley, have taken their place in Notre Dame's long and storied tradition of academic and athletic excellence with a victory over the Purdue University Boilermakers.

This match-up made NCAA history, as it was the first time two teams from the same state appeared in the NCAA women's basketball championship game. I cannot think of a more fitting place from which these two special teams could hail than from Indiana, basketball's heartland. It is a wonderful tribute to these two teams and their fine universities, and an honor for the state of Indiana to gain that distinction.

As Hoosiers across our state and basketball fans around the nation watched with excitement and anticipation, both teams put forth a tremendous effort that made for a spectacular game. These true competitors displayed immense talent and ability as they engaged each other relentlessly throughout the forty minute championship game. The determination and commitment of both the Fighting Irish and the Boilermakers exemplifies our Hoosier values and serves as a tremendous source of pride for the state of Indiana.

Behind every great team is a great coach, and Notre Dame's Muffet McGraw is no exception. Coach McGraw provided the Fighting Irish with the stewardship needed for an outstanding record of thirty-four wins and only two losses during the 2000-2001 season, en route to the national championship. The Notre Dame community should be very proud of both Coach McGraw's leadership and her team's outstanding accomplishments as student athletes.

In dramatic fashion, the Fighting Irish turned around a twelve point deficit and tied the game with one minute remaining. With 5.8 seconds remaining, Ms. Riley made two free throws to complete the comeback and secure a 68-66 victory for the Fighting Irish. Ms. Riley, who earned the tournament's Most Outstanding Player honors, was also named national Player of the Year and was a unanimous selection as first team All-American. Through hard work and determination, Ruth Riley and her teammates advanced the sport of women's basketball and provided inspiration for future generations of young female athletes.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements relating thereto be placed in the RECORD at the appropriate place as if read, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 69) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The text of the resolution is printed in Today's RECORD under "Statements on Submitted Resolutions.")

#### HONORING THE SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS FOR 135 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 70, submitted earlier today by Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 70) honoring the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for its 135 years of service to the people of the United States and their animals.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements relating thereto be placed in the RECORD at the appropriate place as if read, with no intervening action or debate.